

The federal government's lack of enforcement to confirm that the racial and ethnic makeup of Head Start participation matches that of the community.

Even though Angelica Jones' 6-year-old son attended Head Start two years ago and her younger daughter has been eligible to do so as well, she is patiently waiting for a spot in the program.

"I think I got lucky the last time because I got in with no problems," said Jones, a stay-at-home mom who visited several north Fort Worth Head Start centers for availability earlier this week.

"I know there's a long waiting list and there are several of us who go to different [centers] to check for any spots every week."

NCLR, Gonzalez's group, hasn't officially opposed Bush's proposed changes. And although he said the bill doesn't outline a specific plan to increase Hispanic participation "by even one child," he welcomes some of the recommendations.

"The bill is by no means a perfect bill, but does allow for better assessment of communities that make sure the people in most need are the ones being served," he said.

Gonzalez said that assessment could increase Hispanic participation in areas with large or emerging Hispanic populations like Fort Worth.

Still, Whitcamp said that in the long run, the bill would hinder services in Fort Worth because the state would use some of its monies to help other state-funded children programs like CHIPS, that are struggling for a budget.

Handing over Head Start control to the states would further diminish funds by creating an additional filter of overhead costs, said Whitcamp, who oversees 40 centers throughout the country.

"We have been making the argument about our kids being underserved for years," Lopez said.

"This is not a new issue for us."

IRAQ'S WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to talk about something that is truly scary, the President's credibility gap. The fact that Members of Congress, the American people, and our international allies can no longer trust the evidence President Bush uses to justify war is a terrible threat to his credibility and, therefore, to America's security.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members that it is not in order to question the credibility of the President.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Do not take my word for it. Listen to one of my constituents, Roy, from San Rafael. He writes:

I was one of those who, traumatized by 9/11, trusted our government to lead us down the right path based on indisputable evidence and sound judgment. I supported their decision to go to war. I deserve to know if I was duped.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that many people in this country are faced with a similar and terrible dilemma. Are they

to believe whether or not the administration lied to them? Are they to believe that the White House is inept, that they based a decision to send young Americans to die on faulty information?

Another constituent of mine, William, from Sebastopol, wrote about what President Bush's untruths meant to him:

I love my country but I am not very proud of it right now. This administration must answer for their deception. Business as usual is not acceptable.

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And Reede from Forest Knolls, California, sums up exactly why the White House must talk about these untruths and their unwillingness to come clean about them:

There is nothing more essential to democracy than information. The administration's calculated disinformation campaign about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction is a direct attack upon our most cherished democratic values. Such flagrant contempt for the right of the people to control their government is unacceptable.

After September 11, Mr. Speaker, we all wanted to trust. We wanted to give our administration the benefit of the doubt. However, it is increasingly obvious that it is either not worthy of that trust, or it is simply not trustworthy. Either way, the administration must be held accountable for the untruths that came out of their mouths.

Don and Pam, two of my constituents from Santa Rosa, write,

One of the Bush administration's favorite words is accountability. But because of their obsession with secrecy and control, they have successfully avoided making themselves accountable. Reasons for going to war in Iraq and, beyond that, the Bush foreign policy, including preemptive strikes and unilateral action, demands accountability, accountability through thorough investigation.

Mr. Speaker, Americans want answers. They want answers from their administration, and they are getting the runaround.

My constituent, Patrick from Sebastopol, writes,

The administration's repeated use of the phrase, "attempts to rewrite history" is unbelievable. They are the ones attempting to rewrite history.

The simple fact is that the American people demand answers, and it is now up to Congress to get them.

Landis, from my own hometown, Petaluma, says it perfectly:

It is very important to be able to trust one's government. We don't always need to agree, but we do need to believe that our government is working in our best interests. Even if the current administration is able to fool many Americans, it is not fooling the world. Until an independent commission investigates possible manipulations of intelligence data, the world and, indeed, many Americans, will not be able to trust that the Bush administration is working in America's best interest.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for a meaningful investigation into the administration's statements. The people I

work for in Marin and Sonoma Counties and Americans across the country are demanding an investigation, and Congress must carry it out. I am pleased to add my voice to those of my constituents and join the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) in his call for a bipartisan investigation into weapons of mass destruction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICA CALLS FOR THE TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to acknowledge the groundswell of support for an investigation into whether or not the Bush administration made its case for war against Iraq. As proof of the growing demand for honest answers from the Bush administration, we need look no further than the support around the country to create an independent commission to investigate whether the Bush administration manipulated and distorted evidence to take the country to war in Iraq.

Now, over 300,000 people have signed this petition and hundreds of thousands of people commented. Of course, I received thousands of letters from my own district, but tonight I would like to read into the RECORD just some of the over 24,000 comments received from outside of my district in the State of California.

The credibility of this administration in front of the American public and the world at large is our most precious commodity. We must know the truth as soon as possible.

This came from Arcadia, California.

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of this country. I believe that we are heading down a very dangerous and destructive path that is being led by the Bush administration. This country is no more special than all of the countries in the world, and American citizens are just as important as Iraqi citizens. Our actions are not preventing hostility, but I believe it is creating more violence and anger towards America. It is the outrage that stems from within that compels me to write to you and ask you to look into this matter and not merely dismiss it as another policy move.

Again, Arcadia, California.

This one comes from Dublin, California.

As a member of a military family, I am deeply concerned any time a President chooses to send our Armed Forces into danger zones. I have been appalled by the growing evidence that the President may have lied about the reasons for invading and conquering Iraq and fear that many lives may have been lost because of deliberate falsehoods.

From Pleasanton, California: